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ABSTRACT

Since 1963 the United States has witnessed the unprecedented success of what Stewart Udall termed the "third wave" of the conservation movement. With the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency and passage of the National Environmental Policy Act and numerous other environmental bills, concern for the environment has become a significant, accepted, and institutionalized aspect of American life. Today the "fourth wave" is at hand. Now that environmental protection is part of the mainstream of our society, the challenge is to manage the successes of the past decade and a half. New competencies for environmental leadership are needed in five areas: (1) professional administration, (2) collaboration among groups with related values, (3) political action skills, (4) scientific and technological assessment, and (5) a new public education orientation towards the advocacy of positive solutions to environmental problems. The future bodes well for the environmental movement if it attracts additional leaders and if all leaders develop necessary skills in the areas identified. (WB)

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THE FUTURE

OF THE

ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

by

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Dr. Langton has had considerable experience in environmental affairs. He has served as a Regional Director and Assistant to the Director of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He has managed two wildlife sanctuaries and directed an urban Environmental Arts and Science Project in Lowell, Massachusetts. In the early 1960's he successfully organized one of the first community efforts to discontinue the use of chlorinated hydrocarbons for mosquito control in the nation. He was an early advocate for Conservation Commissions and wetlands protection in Massachusetts. In recents years he has served as Vice President of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire and on the Board of the American Freedom from Hunger Foundation.

THE FUTURE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

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THE "THIRD WAVE" OF THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

In 1963 former Secretary of the Interior Stuart Udall wrote *The Quiet Crisis* which portrayed the environmental problems of the time and which called for "a ground swell of concern . . . which could culminate in a third wave of the conservation movement."[1] In the fifteen years since, we have seen such a "ground swell of concern" in changing public attitudes, in the formation of countless environmental groups, and in the creation of thousands of pieces of environmental legislation at all levels of government.

In fact, since 1963 we have witnessed the unprecedented success of the "third wave" of the conservation movement. While only a few dozen national environmental groups existed in early 1960, there are approximately 350 groups today.[2] Although there was little effective federal legislation in 1963 to preserve the environment, by 1969 the National Environmental Policy Act was passed and by 1970 the Environmental Protection Agency was established. In 1965 only 17% of Americans identified the reduction of air and water pollution as a problem warranting government attention, but, by 1970 53% said government should be concerned with these issues.[3]

Today, despite the threat of energy shortages, inflation, and other signs of economic unrest, an even greater proportion of Americans are concerned about the environment. A recent Harris poll indicates that 65% of the people disagreed with the proposal to "slow down environmental clean-up to ease the energy shortage," and 64% disagreed with the statement that we should "slow down the clean-up of air and water pollution to get the economy going again." Further, protecting the environment ranked higher (at 60%) as a national priority than did creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs (44%) and decreasing dependence upon foreign oil (53%). Another recent survey of 100,000 people in North Carolina also confirmed the extent of public support for environmental protection in relation to economic development. In that survey 85% of those polled thought it important to attract new industry to the state, but 89% felt it was also important to protect the environment.[4]

These results indicate that the "quiet crisis" of the environment is no longer a quiet matter. In truth, environmental concern has become a significant aspect of American life. The "third wave of the conservation movement" has culminated.

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

During this period we also witnessed the development of an Environmental Education Act and the creation of numerous environmental education programs. Environmental Law, Environmental Education, Environmental Engineering, and Environmental Economics became areas of professional specialization. Colleges and universities developed courses, majors, and graduate programs concerned with the environment. New professional associations and journals were created. The mass media devoted increasing attention to environmental issues in regular reporting and in special features and programs. Meanwhile, traditional conservation organizations such as the Audubon Society and the National Wildlife Federation grew at an enormous rate while many new national organizations such as the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, and the Cousteau Society became prominent. At the local level, Conservation Commissions were established in thousands of communities, and countless preservation groups and environmental action organizations sprang up across the country.

This popular institutionalized success of the environmental movement has had a profound effect upon America. It has transformed how we think about our resources and growth. It has created awareness of issues not imagined two decades ago and has reoriented our economy inasmuch as environmental protection projects now constitute one of its dominant growth sectors. It has led to the education of a cadre of new specialists, and it has created an entirely new political infrastructure that will remain for generations. As one commentator has noted: "Quite aside from these inescapable demands for reform, however, one can only marvel at the degree to which . . . concerns for water, air, noise, ugliness, and natural open spaces have entered the American consciousness, changed ways of living, and motivated the foundations of countless reform organizations — nearly all of this in a fifteen year period."[5] Indeed this is a remarkable change within a relatively brief period of history.

The most distinctive feature of the "third wave" of the conservation movement has been the extent of its success. In the decade between early 1960's and early 1970's, this movement grew from a cause to an accepted set of institutionalized American values.

In the early 1960's the term "environmental" was seldom used in a popular sense, but by the close of the decade it had become the popular slogan of a powerful movement. Americans became accustomed to hearing about environmentalists, the environmental movement, and environmentalism. By 1970 when the Environmental Protection Agency was created, the President of the United States referred to the 1970's as the Environmental decade.

BEYOND THE CHARISMATIC

Despite the success of the environmental movement, there are many who are uneasy about it because they feel the character of the movement has changed. In the past few years I have spoken with many leaders of environmental organizations who fear that the environmental movement has lost some of its momentum and vitality. As one leader remarked, "I think the environmental movement may be declining. I just don't see the new leaders. We may have run our course." Other leaders have expressed similar anxiety because of opposition and criticism by opponents of the environmental movement.

While the continued successes of the environmental movement hardly suggest decline, they do suggest change. However, this change does not appear to be engendered by failure as much as by success. What seems to be happening is that the environmental movement is being transformed from a relatively charismatic movement to a more institutionalized movement. It is a movement less and less dominated by charismatic leaders, protest, and dramatic causes as it is characterized by day-to-day efforts of education, research, and rulemaking. Furthermore, it is a movement less marked by inspirational leaders and more dominated by leaders who manage.

In these respects the environmental movement in the 1960's and 1970's reaffirms Max Weber's analysis of how the charismatic is transformed into the routine dimensions of social and political life. As Weber noted in his *Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, if the charismatic "is not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon . . . it is necessary for the character of charismatic authority to become radically changed. Indeed, in its pure form charismatic authority may be said to exist only in the process of originating. It cannot remain stable, but becomes either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both."[6] Elsewhere, Weber observes: "It is the fate of charisma, whenever it comes into the permanent institutions of community, to give way to powers of tradition or of rational socialization."[7] To Weber such transformation of any popular movement was viewed as inevitable.

Today the environmental movement has become more rationalized and routinized in relation to social institutions. It is now a movement that is essentially accepted and integrated into the mainstream of our cultural life. This is not to suggest that there is still no need for passion, drama, and charisma, but the environmental movement must confront the demands of rational socialization. In this regard it seems that a "fourth wave" of this movement is before us. The environmental movement has been successfully accepted; the new challenge is the management of that success.

NEW COMPETENCIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

If environmental leaders and organizations are to be effective in their new institutionalized role, they need to develop skills of successful institutional leadership. This is as important for national and state environmental groups as it is for local ones. Therefore, the environmental movement must develop a dual consciousness to continue to be successful. There should be as much concern for the institutional capability of environmental organizations as there is for the substance of specific environmental issues. In the future, environmentalists need to be as concerned about the state of leadership of the environmental movement as about the state of the environment.

What areas of institutional capability are needed if environmental organizations and their leaders are to be effective? There are five areas in which environmental groups (or any public interest groups) need to strengthen competency in order to remain effective in the years ahead.

1. *The Need for Professional Administration:*

Environmental organizations cannot afford the luxury of casual or sloppy management. The rigors of organizational survival in a complex institutional society demand efficient and enlightened administration. As David Cohen, President of Common Cause, has recently said: "To succeed, a public interest group must operate as a modern organization dealing with issues that matter to people, consulting with its members, focusing its constituencies and energies, respecting the professional role of the media by providing them with accurate and useful information and paying attention to administrative management. (Failure to pay attention to administrative management will snuff out all good intentions. The public interest constituency will need its share of MBA's, just as it needed creative lawyers, imaginative researchers, skilled lobbyists, and inventive activists) . . . Professionalism must be a key style of operation for the public-interest constituency."[8] While effective

professional management is not a subject that "turns on" environmental leaders, it is important that they be "turned on" to it as the quality of management will have a great deal to do with the advancement of environmental groups.

Professional administrative capabilities that particularly need to be fostered among environmental organizations include the ability to undertake moderate and long-range planning, fund raising, financial planning and cost control, program evaluation, effective personnel practices, and management information systems. The limited financial resources available to environmental groups require these skills for responsible stewardship; and the need for public trust calls for respected professional management.

Undoubtedly some environmental leaders will fear that attention to professional administration may lead to bureaucratic excess in the environmental movement. Although this is an ever present danger, it is not an inevitability. To avoid a cult of bureaucracy in the future, environmental organizations must be guided by values of humanistic management as well as efficiency. Therefore, environmental leaders who are recruited and trained should be as capable of working effectively with people as they are at handling administrative detail.

2. *The Necessity of Collaboration:*

A dominant characteristic of modern organizational life is interaction among organizations. "Modern society," comments Amitai Etzioni, "has found it necessary to build more and more instruments to regulate this interaction to encourage increase not only in the effectiveness and satisfaction within each one but also of the relations among them."[9] This need for meaningful and cooperative relations among organizations is greater today that ever before, whether it be in the marketplace, government, or the voluntary sector. It is particularly critical for environmental organizations since few possess sufficient resources to achieve their public education and sociopolitical goals.

Collaboration in the environmental movement must take place among environmental group (intramovement collaboration) and with other groups that may share some common values (inter-movement collaboration). Even a cursory review of the successes of the environmental movement gives evidence of the importance of both kinds of collaboration. Despite many instances of successful collaboration in the past, the present extent of this cooperation is not sufficient to sustain the success of the environmental movement in the future.

At an inter-movement level this lack of sufficient coalition building has become more evident in the past few years. Congressman Morris Udall has noted that "Part of the reason the environmental movement finds itself in trouble today is that we failed during the heady years of the '60's to make friends and forge alliances with groups that might be largely with us now: blue collar America, enlightened industry, the minorities who inhabit our rundown cities. But in those days, environmentalists were not in a mood to compromise or to play a role in "their" issues, and we predictably find few friends around to sustain us during the dark days of the energy crisis."[10]

In the years ahead the environmental movement will have to continuously form alliances if it is to succeed. Accordingly, environmental leaders will have to develop appropriate attitudes and skills for coalition building. It will also be necessary to develop skills for permanent collaboration among environmental leaders and groups. Furthermore, these leaders will need effective skills in human relations and organizational development. They will have to design imaginative ways of sharing organizational resources. They will have to learn to build and sustain trust as they modify their organizational agendas to avoid duplication and unnecessary competition. They will have to learn how to ask for and receive help while learning how to give help. And above all, they will have to be able to create cooperative organizational systems in order to make collaboration a permanent rather than an occasional feature of their organizational functioning.

In order to foster collaboration among environmental groups, new types of organizational arrangements must be developed. For example, coalition organizations are needed at the local, state, and national level to encourage joint planning among groups. Cooperative programs need to be established among groups in each state and region of the country to provide effective training opportunities for staff and volunteers. And joint efforts will be needed to identify and make available technical information and resource persons to environmental groups. Although creating these kinds of collaborative enterprises is difficult, it is absolutely essential in order to meet the emerging needs of the environmental movement.

3. *The Importance of Political Action Skills:*

Some years ago John Gardner wrote: "Effective steps to save the environment will require a highly expert knowledge of government machinery, a knowledge of political infighting, a knowledge of how tough and enforceable legislation must be written . . . These are subjects that well-intentioned Americans have

stubbornly avoided, and by doing so they have all too often condemned themselves to failure in the battle to save the environment."[11] If future failures are to be minimized, environmental leaders, at all levels, need to develop these areas of political knowledge and skill. There are three skills areas in particular that will grow in importance in the years ahead: drafting legislation, lobbying, and participating in government-sponsored citizen-involvement programs.

Drafting Legislation: At the federal, state, and local level, environmental leaders should be informed about the process of drafting legislation and how they can initiate, assist, and influence this process. More specifically, environmental leaders need to be able to draft legislation and ordinances and work with appropriate legislative committees and their staffs. It is also important that they understand how to track the development of a piece of legislation in order to be able to support it.

A recent study of 1,150 environmental leaders in New England indicated a priority interest in developing these skills. This suggests a growing confidence among environmental leaders in the power of legislation as a tool for environmental protection. It also indicates increased interest among environmentalists in being more pro-active than reactive by creating adequate laws to support their concerns.

Lobbying: While lobbying has always been an important political action skill, the growth in the number of special interest and public interest lobbying efforts is changing the lobbying environment. Therefore, lobbying is becoming a very sophisticated art that requires considerable research and planning. Further, awareness of the nature and extent of lobbying permitted for environmental organizations which have tax exempt status under section 501-C-3 of the Internal Revenue Code needs to be clearly understood.

To remain effective, environmentalists must be concerned about the quality and the quantity of their lobbying capability in light of the enormous growth in the lobbying efforts of business and industry. As an example of this growth, one need only consider the rapid increase in federally registered Political Action Committees (PAC's). Between 1974 and 1977 the number of these groups grew from 608 to 1298; whereas there were only 89 corporate groups in 1974, there were 538 in 1977.[12] This represents a 509% growth rate in corporate PAC's. Further, environmentalists should be concerned about the substantial increase of business and professional groups as contributors to political candidates. For example, in 1974 these groups gave a total of 4.8 million dollars to Congressional candidates, but in the 1976 Congressional election the amount increased to 11.6 million, a 142% increase in two years.[13] The recent U.S. Supreme Court Decision in the case of the First National Bank of Boston vs. Bellotti, which allows business broad latitude in making political expenditures and lobbying, will undoubtedly further encourage the growth in lobbying and political contributions by the corporate community. This means that environmentalists will have to increase the extent and the quality of their lobbying efforts to keep pace with the enormous increase in lobbying from private sector interests.

Citizen Involvement: A major change in democratic practice in America in the past twenty years is the dramatic increase in citizen participation efforts by government agencies.[14] As administrative agencies of government have increased their discretionary decision-making power, efforts to inform and involve citizens in agency decision-making have become widespread. One recent study by the Community Services Administration catalogues hundreds of citizen participation requirements and programs among federal agencies.[15] Another study has indicated over 100 citizen participation requirements in one state and estimated that as much as 50 to 100 million dollars may be spent annually in that state among state agencies for citizen participation efforts.[16]

Although there is legitimate concern about the questionable quality of many citizen involvement efforts, it is clear that citizen involvement programs are here to stay and will provide important forums in which environmental groups should be involved. In order to participate effectively in these activities, it will be necessary for environmental leaders to develop a number of citizen involvement skills. Not among the least of these will be remaining informed of citizen involvement opportunities at various levels of government, learning how to place capable representatives on advisory committees, preparing and delivering thoughtful testimony at public hearings, participating in shaping the rules for citizen participation in various government agencies, preparing enlightened written commentary, and monitoring citizen participation programs to assure that the rules of the game are not violated and that citizen contributions are genuinely considered.

4. *The Capacity for Scientific and Technological Assessment:*

Nearly a decade ago in his optimistic assessment of the potential relation between man and technology, Victor Ferkis extolled the notion of a new model of "technological man." "Technological man," he

offered "will be man at home with science and technology, for he will dominate them rather than be dominated by them."[17] Unfortunately, the day of technological man is still far off because man seems hardly at home with or dominant master over science and technology.

It has been and will continue to be a principal mission of the environmental movement to assess the impact of science and technology on man and the biosphere. Because of the number and complexity of scientific issues and the rate of technological change, this is clearly an enormous challenge that environmental groups and organizations cannot meet by themselves. Further, it is unrealistic to expect any environmental group to be able to develop competency in more than a few areas of environmental concern. Therefore, it is important that environmental organizations develop imaginative organizational procedures for assuring adequate scientific and technological assessment.

To assure adequate and technological assessment, environmental organizations should develop capability in at least three areas: first, they will have to work closely with scientists and government to shape research and investigatory agendas concerning environmental issues. Second, environmental groups will need to collaborate in establishing a division of labor in regard to specific issues. To deal with issues in sufficient depth, different groups will have to specialize in one or several particular areas. Third, environmental leaders will have to know how to manage efforts of scientific and technological assessment in areas in which they have little or no technical training. This will require knowledge of and means of obtaining technical and scientific resources. Skill in attracting and assembling competent technicians and scientists as well as dedicated citizens willing to study and learn (particularly on a voluntary basis) will also be needed. And it will require the ability to organize and help professionals and laymen work together in the assessment of scientific and technical matters.

5. *The Demand for a New Educational Orientation:*

H.G. Wells once commented that "human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." In the past 15 years, the environmental movement has played a critical role in this race by increasing public awareness of catastrophic threats to our environment. In retrospect, it is clear that the educational impact of this movement has been monumental. In future prospect, it is clear that this educational impact must continue.

However, environmentalists should anticipate new tensions and demands in their public education role. In recent years, the environmental movement has been under increasing attack by critics as being essentially negative and obstructionist. In some instances these charges have been well founded, and in others they have been mere propaganda. Nonetheless, these views are instructive to the future educational demands upon an institutionalized environmental movement. Basically this suggests that the environmental movement must be as concerned with advocating realistic and positive solutions to environmental problems as in warning about environmental hazards. This means that environmentalists will have to gear educational efforts toward constructive discovery and advocacy as well as toward dedicated opposition. Without the former, the credibility of the latter will be minimized.

In this regard, environmental leaders will have to address issues of economic development from a balanced and well informed perspective. This will require knowledge of economics and the ability to address critical issues with business and labor leaders in a constructive and realistic manner. A recent study of over 1,100 environmental leaders in New England indicates a substantial interest in this area. For example, in rating 42 issues, Economics of Natural Resources Protection (69%), Economic Development and the Environment (58%), and Jobs and the Environment (52%) were rated as the first, fifth, and thirteenth issues of greatest priority among a majority of respondents.[18]

Expanding the educational focus of the environmental movement will not be an easy task and many environmentalists may fall into the easy trap of adversary isolation. It is easier to be in opposition. It is easier to attract people to fight than to solve problems. It is easier to frighten than to enlighten. It is easier to arouse anger than dedication.

Hopefully, environmental leaders of the future will not take the easy way out. Hopefully, they will develop attitudes and skills to be constructive partners as well as tough opponents. Hopefully, they will be able to cooperate, create viable alternatives, and compromise when it is prudent. Hopefully, they will possess the human capacity to try to work with those with whom they most disagree.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT IN 1985 AND 2000

What the environmental movement will be like in 1985 and 2000 is uncertain. However, I suspect it will be highly diverse and decentralized, but much more strongly coordinated. Most likely it will be more institutionalized, although spontaneous protest

movements will continue. It may well be that at least half of the issues with which environmentalists will be concerned in the year 2000 are things we hardly imagine today and that the environmental movement will provide some of the most exciting career opportunities for the next generation. And I imagine that those who are committed to environmental values will constitute a major political force.

Above all, the environmental movement will probably be even more integrated into our social attitudes and institutions in the future. It is very likely that for the remainder of this century, issues of planning and political decision making will be as dominant as issues of technological development have been since World War II and that anticipation and evaluation of environmental factors will be paramount. Further, I suspect that the tensions between economic development and environmental concern will be reduced and managed more effectively.

While this may bode well for the future of the environmental movement, it cannot happen unless new environmental leaders are attracted and all environmental leaders develop new competencies. While the third wave of the conservation movement has broken, the fourth wave now swells.

1 Stuart Udall, *The Quiet Crisis.* New York: Avon Books, 1963, p. 199.

2 *Conservation Directory* Washington: The National Wildlife Federation, 1977.

3 Gallup Poll *Index*, June, 1970, p. 8.

4 *North Carolina Tomorrow: One States Approach to Citizen Involvement in Planning for its Future.* Governors Office, State of North Carolina, Raleigh, N.C., 1978.

5 Sydney B. Ahlstrom, "National Trauma and Changing Religious Values." *Daedalus*, Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Winter, 1978, p. 22.

6 Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization.* New York: The Free Press, 1966, p. 364.

7 Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, edited and translated by H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, New York: Oxford University Press. 1967. p. 253.

8 David Cohen, "The Public Interest Movement and Citizen Participation" in Stuart Langton, ed., *Citizen Participation in America* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Co., 1978), p. 60.

9 Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1964, p. 113.

10 *Congressional Record*, July 16, 1975.

11 John Gardner,"Foreward" in Nelson Rockefeller, *Our Environment Can Be Saved.* New York: Doubleday and Co., 1970.

12 *Congressional Quarterly*, April 8, 1978, p. 853.

13 *In Common: The Common Cause Report from Washington:* Spring, 1978, p. 5.

14 For a broader description and analysis of this phenomenon see Stuart Langton, *Citizen Participation in America, op. cit.*

15 *Citizen Participation.* Washington: Community Services Administration, 1978.

16 Stuart Langton and Associates, *A Survey of Citizen Participation Requirements and Activities Among Major State Agencies of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.* (Fremont, New Hampshire, 1976).

17 Victor C. Ferkis, *Technological Man: The Myth and the Reality.* New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1969, p. 246.

18 Stuart Langton, *Learning Interests and Needs Among Environmental Leaders in New England.* (Medford, Mass.: Lincoln Filene Center for Citizenship and Public Affairs, Tufts University, 1978.)